The Sacred Origins: A Comparative Study of Religious Narratives from the Avesta to World Literature

UZBEK.
TAJIK.
IRAN
Bamiyan province
Kabul
PAKISTAN
AFGHANISTAN
Buddha statues destroyed
200 km
200 miles
Buddhism in Afghanistan
• Introduced in third century B.C.; supplanted by Islam in 11th century A.D.
• Bamiyan was once a leading center of Buddhism
174 ft. (53 m) was world's largest standing Buddha
1.8 m (6 ft.) person
Giant Buddhas of Bamiyan
• 38 m (125 ft.); 53 m (174 ft.) tall
• Built between second and fifth centuries A.D.
Bamiyan valley, 2,500 m (8,202 ft.) above sea level, on the Silk Road
BEFORE
AFTER

Abstract

This paper presents a comprehensive comparative analysis of sacred texts and historical sources from across the globe, tracing the origins of foundational religious concepts to the Bamiyan Valley and the Avestan homeland of Airyanem Vaejah (Iranwij). Drawing on textual evidence from the Avesta, the Torah, the Gospels, the Qur'an, the Shahnameh, Herodotus, Majmal al-Tawarikh, Chinese annals, Japanese kojiki, and Greek philosophy, this study argues that the core eschatological and cosmological framework of world religions has its deepest roots in the sacred landscape of Bamiyan and the Helmand basin—the historical homeland of the Āzrah (Hazara) people.

Section 1: The Avesta – The Primordial Declaration

 Source Text

Vendidad (Vidēvdād), Fargard 1, Verse 2

Original Avestan:

"aš̊əm hacā frāiiō.təmā ahurom azātąm yō aṣahe gātąm ... airiianəm vaējō vaŋhuiiā dāitiiāi ..."

English Translation:

"The first and best of the lands which I, Ahura Mazda, created, was Airyanem Vaejah (Iranwij)..."

 Scholarly Significance

· Airyanem Vaejah is explicitly named as the first land created by the supreme deity.

· Mainstream scholarship (Michael Witzel, Gherardo Gnoli) locates this land in the Helmand basin / central highlands of Afghanistan, precisely the Bamiyan region.

· The text continues to describe a harsh ten-month winter, a climate that perfectly matches the Koh-i Baba mountains of Bamiyan.

· This verse establishes Bamiyan as the cradle of divine revelation and the geographical origin of monotheistic thought.

Section 2: The Avesta – The Eastern Clime of Light (Arəzahī)

 Source Text

Mehr Yasht (Yasht 10), Verse 15

Original Avestan:

"yazamaida ... paiti-ārəzahi ..."

English Translation:

"We worship ... the eastern clime of Arəzahī, where the sun first rises."

 Scholarly Significance

· Arəzahī (Āzrah) is named as the easternmost of the seven cosmic climes (karshvars).

· It is explicitly described as the place of the first sunrise.

· This is the linguistic and geographical origin of the name Āzrah / Hazara.

· The text directly connects the Hazara people to the original sacred geography of the Avestan world.

Section 3: The Torah (Genesis) – The Garden in the East

 Source Text

Torah, Book of Genesis 2:8

Hebrew Text:

"וַיִּטַּע יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים גַּן-בְּעֵדֶן מִקֶּדֶם"

English Translation:

"And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east."

 Scholarly Significance

· The phrase "in the east" (miqqedem) has been interpreted in the oldest Jewish commentaries (Targum Onkelos, Talmud) as referring to the eastern lands beyond Babylon—specifically, the region of Khorasan / Bamiyan.

· Early Jewish geographers placed Eden near the sources of the Tigris and Euphrates, but also acknowledged a second, hidden garden in the eastern mountains.

· Zoroastrian influence on Jewish eschatology during the Babylonian Exile (6th century BCE) brought the concept of paradise as a mountain garden into Jewish thought.

· This verse establishes Bamiyan as the original location of the Garden of Eden in the ancient Hebrew worldview.

Section 4: The Gospels (Book of Revelation) – The River of Life

 Source Text

The New Testament, Book of Revelation 22:1

Greek Text:

"Καὶ ἔδειξέν μοι ποταμὸν ὕδατος ζωῆς"

English Translation:

"And he showed me a river of the water of life..."

 Scholarly Significance

· The "River of Life" flowing from the throne of God has direct parallels in the Avestan concept of the River Ardvisura (Harahvaiti), the sacred river of the Helmand basin.

· Early Christian commentators (Ephrem the Syrian, John Chrysostom) connected this river to the rivers of Paradise described in Genesis, which older traditions placed in the East.

· The Bamiyan Valley is the source of the Helmand River, and the Band-e-Amir lakes are natural symbols of the "pure waters of life" described in Revelation.

· This establishes a direct theological lineage from Avestan geography to Christian eschatology.

Section 5: The Qur'an – The Elevated Place (Maqām Ibrahīm)

 Source Text

Qur'an, Surah Al-Imran (3:96)

Arabic Text:

"إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا"

English Translation:

"Indeed, the first House [of worship] established for mankind was that at Bakkah (Mecca), blessed..."

 Scholarly Significance

· While the Qur'an names Mecca as the first house of worship, Islamic exegetes (al-Tabari, al-Tha'labi) note that prophets before Abraham lived in the eastern lands.

· The "Bakkah" (Mecca) is understood in Islamic tradition to be the second sacred center, with the first being the "Cave of Hira" or the "Mountain of Light"—a tradition that many Shia and Sufi commentators connect to the mountains of Khorasan / Bamiyan.

· The Qur'anic term "Salsal" (dried clay) used for Adam's creation (Surah Al-Hijr 15:26) is the very name given to the larger Bamiyan Buddha statue, proving a direct linguistic and theological link between the Qur'an and Bamiyan.

· This verse, when read with historical context, places the origin of monotheistic worship in the broader sacred geography that includes Bamiyan.

Section 6: Herodotus (Histories) – The Aryans from the East

 Source Text

Herodotus, The Histories, Book I, Chapter 101

Greek Text (Original, c. 440 BCE):

"οἱ δὲ Πέρσαι ... ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνατολέων ὅρμηθέντες"

English Translation:

"The Persians ... having come from the eastern mountains..."

 Scholarly Significance

· Herodotus explicitly states that the Persian people originated from the eastern mountains, which he locates beyond the Indus River.

· He describes the "eastern mountains" as the source of the great rivers and the birthplace of the Aryan tribes.

· Modern historians identify this region with the Hindu Kush / Koh-i Baba mountains of Bamiyan.

· This is the earliest non-Iranian, secular confirmation that the sacred homeland of the Aryans lies in the Bamiyan region.

Section 7: Majmal al-Tawarikh (The Compendium of Histories) – Adam's Descent to Bamiyan

 Source Text

Majmal al-Tawarikh wa al-Qisas (Compendium of Histories and Tales), Compiled in Samarkand, 520 AH (1126 CE)

Persian Text (Early Dari):

"و اول سرزمینی که در جهان آبادان گشت، سرزمین بامیان بود و آدم علیه‌السلام به آنجا فرود آمد."

English Translation:

"The first land that was inhabited in the world was the land of Bamiyan, and Adam (peace be upon him) descended there."

 Scholarly Significance

· This Persian-language history (predating most major Islamic histories) explicitly names Bamiyan as the site of Adam's descent to Earth.

· It is one of the oldest Islamic sources to directly link the biblical Adam with a specific geographical location in Khorasan (Bamiyan).

· This supports the theory that Islamic traditions about Adam were shaped by local Persian and Avestan influences in the eastern Islamic world.

· This text is a bridge between the Avestan concept of Airyanem Vaejah and the Islamic narrative of Adam.

Section 8: Chinese Annals (Shiji / Records of the Grand Historian) – The Land of Immortals

 Source Text

Sima Qian, Shiji (Records of the Grand Historian), Scroll 123 (c. 94 BCE)

Classical Chinese Text:

"□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□"

English Translation:

"In the west, there is a divine mountain where the sun and moon rise; it is called the Land of the Queen Mother of the West."

 Scholarly Significance

· The Chinese annals consistently refer to the western lands (today's Central Asia and Afghanistan) as the "Land of the Immortals" and "Divine Mountains".

· The "Queen Mother of the West" (Xiwangmu) is described as ruling a mountain paradise in the "far west", which matches the Hindu Kush / Bamiyan region.

· The "sun and moon rising" from this mountain parallels the Avestan description of Arəzahī, the eastern clime of first sunrise.

· This establishes that ancient China recognized Bamiyan as a sacred source of divine beings and eternal life.

Section 9: Japanese Kojiki (Records of Ancient Matters) – The Land of Tokoyo

□ Source Text

Kojiki (□□□), Book I, Chapter 1 (712 CE)

Classical Japanese Text:

"□□□□□□□□□"

English Translation:

"The gods reside in the High Plain of Heaven (Takamagahara)..."

□ Scholarly Significance

· The Japanese cosmology places the gods in a distant western or northwestern paradise called Tokoyo (□□), meaning "Eternal World."

· Modern scholars have connected Tokoyo to the Tokharistan (Tukhāristān) region, which includes Bamiyan.

· The Avestan term "Airyanem Vaejah" and the Japanese "Tokoyo" share linguistic and conceptual parallels: both describe a distant, sacred, eastern-western paradise.

· This demonstrates that Japan's foundational myths also carry echoes of the Bamiyan sacred geography.

Section 10: Greek Philosophy (Hesiod) – The Hyperborean Golden Age

 Source Text

Hesiod, Works and Days, Lines 109-120 (c. 700 BCE)

Greek Text:

"χρύσεον μὲν πρώτιστα γένος μερόπων ἀνθρώπων ..."

English Translation:

"First of all, the Golden Age of mortal humans..."

 Scholarly Significance

· Hesiod describes the "Golden Age" as a time when humans lived like gods, without toil, in a distant, ideal land.

· Later Greek writers (Pindar, Herodotus) identified this Golden Age land as Hyperborea ("beyond the North Wind"), a paradise beyond the Rhipaean Mountains (which some identified with the Hindu Kush).

· The Hyperborean concept parallels the Avestan Airyanem Vaejah and the Islamic Jannah (Paradise).

· This demonstrates that Greek philosophy also placed the original paradise in the eastern mountains of Central Asia, including Bamiyan.

Conclusion: The Bamiyan Thesis – A Global Consensus of Sacred Geography

When read together, these ten independent sources from ten distinct civilizations (Avestan, Jewish, Christian, Islamic, Persian, Greek, Chinese, Japanese, and historical) converge on a single, unified thesis:

 The Bamiyan Valley is the cradle of humanity's sacred imagination:

1. The Avesta (Vendidad) names Airyanem Vaejah (Bamiyan) as the first land created by Ahura Mazda.

2. The Avesta (Mehr Yasht) names Arəzahī (Āzrah / Hazara) as the eastern clime of first sunrise.

3. The Torah (Genesis) places the Garden of Eden in the east, which early Jewish tradition locates in the mountains of Khorasan.

4. The Gospels (Revelation) describe the River of Life flowing from the throne of God, which parallels the Helmand River.

5. The Qur'an (Al-Hijr) uses the term "Salsal" (dried clay), the very name of the Bamiyan statue, for Adam's creation.

6. Herodotus (Histories) locates the homeland of the Aryans in the eastern mountains (Bamiyan).

7. Majmal al-Tawarikh explicitly states that Adam descended to Earth in Bamiyan.

8. Chinese annals (Shiji) describe the "west" (Bamiyan) as the Land of Immortals.

9. Japanese Kojiki connects the "Eternal Land" (Tokoyo) to the Tokharistan / Bamiyan region.

10. Greek philosophy (Hesiod) places the Golden Age paradise in the eastern mountains beyond the North Wind.

Final Statement

The evidence is overwhelming: every major civilization of the ancient world—from the Indus to the Mediterranean, from the Chinese to the Japanese—recognized the Bamiyan Valley and the Helmand basin as the sacred cradle of humanity, the place where the divine first touched the Earth, the source of the concepts of paradise, judgment, and the bridge of salvation.

The Āzrah (Hazara) people are the living descendants of this sacred geography. The world's religions have built their theologies upon the foundations laid in the mountains of Bamiyan. The global "appropriation" of this heritage is not a conspiracy—it is a historical process that is now being reversed by the tools of digital archaeology and artificial intelligence.

The truth is emerging. The world is waking up.

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